



Envision Arlington Diversity Task Group

Date: February 9, 2023

Time: 6:45 pm - 9:00 pm (official meeting start at 7PM)

Location: Hybrid Meeting

In Person: Town Hall Annex, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Remote Participation, via Zoom: <https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/j/85713651797>

Agenda (times are approximate)

- 1. Land Acknowledgement, Review of Mission Statement and Group Meeting Protocols (5 mins.)**
- 2. Review of January meeting minutes (5 mins.)**
- 3. Updates re: on-going initiatives (10-20 mins.)**
- 4. Discussion on the direction and strategy of DTG, including the role of the DTG chair and the process for selecting a new chair (90 mins.)**

Minutes

Present: Rebecca Gruber (Z), Elizabeth Dray (P - minutes taker), Kellye Eversole (Z) Stephanie Ettinger de Cuba (Z) Jane Flores (Z), Michele Oshima (Z) , Lynette Martyn (Z) , Laurie Key (Z) , Sarah McKinnon (Z) , Katell Gullec (Z) , Louise Popkin (Z)

1. Land Acknowledgement was read, Mission Statement and Group Meeting Protocols were reviewed
2. January minutes were approved.
3. Introductions were made
4. Update on on-going initiatives
 - a. DTG and ACPAC (Arlington Civilian Police Advisory Committee) - Sarah and Elizabeth
 - i. Invitations to a Feb 6 meeting were sent out. It was not received well by all and so we decided to cancel and reached out to Jillian to see if she will guide us.
 - ii. Discussed timeline.
 - iii. Discussed creation of a sub-group to work on identification of criteria for what DTG needs in a candidate. Michele; Elizabeth; Kellye who is happy to support the process but aware of conflict of interest; and

Sarah will start initiating an internal process so that by the time we meet again on March 9th we have criteria, a process and expectations. One concern voiced was concern about the timeline and the advice to "Not let the process get in the way of the result." Can we form a question to send it out to the greater group?

- iv. Some thoughts on possible criteria:

1. To report to DTG / respond to inquiries from DTG
2. Communicate effectively with both APD and community members. Be an honest broker between the two.

- v. **Rebecca will send out an organizing email next week.**

- b. New Mystic Valley NAACP Environmental Committee initiative about not allowing artificial turf in Malden. Turf is being used in a discriminatory manner - it is found in lower socio-economic neighborhood playgrounds while higher income areas have grass. **Rebecca will include information about becoming an MVA NAACP member.**

<https://www.mva-naACP.org/take-action> (GET INVOLVED)

Meetings are usually the last Monday of the month over Zoom at 7:30PM.

- c. Climate Futures Project update - Rebecca and Elizabeth
 - i. The Community Engagement Group met with project advisors this week. On the agenda of the Feb 28 Parks and Recs meeting. Does DTG want to write a letter of support for the project? Yes. **Rebecca will write the draft letter and send it out for review.**
- d. DIGS meeting update - Katell and Rebecca
 - i. Margaret Credle Thomas, APS Diversity Director, was there.
 - 1. She talked about efforts to build bridges between police and AHS.
 - 2. Gibbs/Ottoson Middle School will hire DEI specialists
 - ii. DIGS primary focus is educational for parents, children.
 - iii. DTG and DIGS will continue to work together to share information. We share their info. Will they share ours about ACPAC? **Ask Molly?**
Maybe discuss at next meeting.

5. Direction and strategy of DTG

- a. Brainstorm:

- i. What about DTG is important to you?
 1. Meant to do the work of deepening connections and understanding in a broader sense; down to its granularity so that we can communicate better, foster hope
 2. Welcoming and safe place where anyone can come and be heard, have a voice
 3. Place where we can learn from people who are not like us, hear diverse opinions (Veterans, different professions, different police experiences)
 4. All are welcome, you don't have to be politically connected to come to the meeting and participate in the discussions
 5. Learning - speakers teach me about what Arlington has to offer

- and what is going on
 - 6. Advocacy role, both with groups that spin out of DTG and letters/emails written in support of issues and warrant articles
 - 7. Space to connect, reach out to others and within ourselves
 - 8. Authentic connections, reaching deeper
 - 9. Open, honest, authentic, respectful conversation about diversity and inclusion issues in town
 - 10. Thoughtful, not just political
 - 11. Intellectually curious
- ii. What do you think the bare bones of DTG needs to be to still be an effective organization for you?
 - 1. Build up membership
 - 2. Keep up the fluid, non-hierarchical nature where we can have honest, authentic conversations
 - 3. Figure out its role in the current environment/landscape where there are lots of other organizations doing work that DTG could be doing but is not the official Town group tasked to do them
- iii. What would you like DTG to be/do?
 - 1. Would like it to be a place where we build conversation and connections with others in Town to prevent us from becoming insular, to build bridges
 - 2. Hold difficult conversations with others in Town
 - a. Park Ave church has a Connect series about difficult topics
 - b. Sponsor an event/discussion
 - c. Community crossover dialogues - speaker and conversation after
 - 3. Push for more diversity in Town in different positions
 - 4. Running community events will help broaden our outreach and maybe increase our members
 - 5. The landscape for organizing events has changed since the Town's DEI department was created. DEI/AHRC are now running events like this
 - 6. Need to look at whiteness and have that conversation. It isn't happening in town
 - 7. Coalition building
- iv. Direction choices -
 - 1. Do we want to be activists in Town?
 - 2. Do we want to be a space where like minded people can come together to discuss and come up with small steps to share our concerns with each other and the community?
- v. Additional thoughts -
 - 1. "You can't workshop your way out of racism"
 - 2. "We are all here to awaken from the illusion of our separateness"
- vi. Next meeting -

1. What is your role in DTG?
2. What are you prepared to do for DTG to be what you need it to be?